

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 118182  
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS PFOR IS US

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO SENATOR HUMPHREY ON U.S.-  
ISRAEL ARMS RELATIONSHIP  
REF: STATE 115287

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE  
PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO SENATOR HUMPHREY ON THE PLACE OF  
ISRAEL IN OUR ARMS POLICY.

2. QUOTE:

MAY 12, 1977

TO HUBERT HUMPHREY

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I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES FOR MEETING WITH  
ME TODAY. YOUR VIEWS AND WISE COUNSEL ARE INVALUABLE. LET  
ME REVIEW OUR DISCUSSION AND REITERATE OUR BASIC AGREEMENT.

I UNDERSTAND THAT YOUR SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE SENATE FOREIGN  
RELATIONS COMMITTEE IS CONSIDERING PUTTING INTO LAW SEVERAL  
ASPECTS OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSED ARMS TRANSFER

POLICY WHICH HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF CONSULTATION WITH THE CONGRESS. IN THAT CONSULTATION, CONCERN HAS BEEN EXPRESSED

THAT ISRAEL WAS NOT PLACED IN "THE EXCEPTED" CATEGORY OF NATIONS SUCH AS NATO MEMBERS.

LET ME SPEAK FRANKLY IN SAYING THAT ISRAEL WAS NOT PLACED IN THAT CATEGORY SIMPLY BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL DO EVERYTHING NECESSARY TO INSURE ISRAEL'S SECURITY. IN MY VIEW, THIS IS ESSENTIAL NOT ONLY TO DETER WAR BUT TO MAKE PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE, AS WELL AS TO INSURE WHATEVER SETTLEMENT WE CAN ACHIEVE.

I RECOGNIZE THE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES THE UNITED STATES HAS TOWARD ISRAEL IN THIS REGARD AND THE PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION THAT THEREFORE MUST BE GIVEN TO OUR MILITARY ARMS AND COPRODUCTION ARRANGEMENTS WITH ISRAEL. OUR APPRECIATION OF THAT RESPONSIBILITY AND OUR ACTIONS THAT ARE BASED UPON IT WILL NOT BE DIMINISHED BY THE ARMS TRANSFER POLICY WHICH I PLAN TO ADOPT.

ACCORDINGLY, I HAVE INSERTED EXPLICIT LANGUAGE WHICH ACKNOWLEDGES OUR SPECIAL SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL. THE RESTRAINTS I AM IMPOSING WILL APPLY EXCEPT WHERE I DETERMINE THAT COUNTRIES FRIENDLY TO THE UNITED STATES MUST DEPEND ON ADVANCED WEAPONRY TO OFFSET QUANTITATIVE AND OTHER DISADVANTAGES IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A REGIONAL BALANCE.

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BY DISCUSSING MY ARMS TRANSFER POLICY WITH CONGRESS, I BELIEVE I MADE CLEAR THAT I INTEND TO CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS QUITE CLOSELY ON THIS ISSUE. LEGISLATION INCLUDING SPECIFIC EXCEPTIONS FOR ISRAEL WOULD HAVE VERY UNFORTUNATE CONSEQUENCES. IT WOULD JEOPARDIZE THE DELICATE ROLE WE HAVE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AS A FIRM FRIEND OF ISRAEL AND YET THE HONEST BROKER BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE ARABS WITH WHOM WE ALSO HOPE TO HAVE BETTER RELATIONS IN THE FUTURE. I BELIEVE THIS ROLE IS ESSENTIAL TO ACHIEVING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

SECONDLY, I BELIEVE SUCH LEGISLATION WILL LEAD TO OTHER COUNTRIES INSISTING ON AN EXCEPTION STATUS FOR THEMSELVES. IT THEREFORE RUNS A SERIOUS RISK OF TAKING THE GUTS OUT OF AN ARMS RESTRAINT POLICY THAT I BELIEVE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE STRONGLY SUPPORT AND WHICH THE CONGRESS HAS LONG URGED.

LET ME CONCLUDE BY SAYING THAT I BELIEVE THERE IS NO  
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MY VIEW AND THAT OF THE CONGRESS ON THE  
SUBSTANCE OF THE ISSUE. WE BOTH WANT TO RESTRAIN ARMS.

WE BOTH RECONGIZE OUR UNIQUE RESPONSIBILITIES WITH REGARD  
TO ISRAEL'S SECURITY. I AM DETERMINED THAT, IN ACCORDANCE  
WITH THE HISTORIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES  
AND ISRAEL AND PREVIOUS AND CONTINUING UNDERSTANDINGS, MY  
POLICY OF RESTRAINT IN U.S. ARMS TRANSFERS, INCLUDING ARMS  
SALES CEILINGS, SHALL NOT IMPAIR ISRAEL'S DETERRENT  
STRENGTH NOR UNDERMINE THE MILITARY BALANCE IN THE MIDDLE  
EAST. IT IS MY VIEW THAT WHATEVER DIFFERENCES WE MAY HAVE  
RELATE TO THE FORM IN WHICH THIS SHARED POSITION IS  
EXPRESSED. I WOULD URGE THAT YOU NOT CODIFY THIS IN  
LEGISLATION BECAUSE OF THE RISKS THAT I HAVE DESCRIBED.

SINCERELY, JIMMY CARTER   END QUOTE.           VANCE  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO SENATOR HUMPHREY ON U.S.- ISRAEL ARMS RELATIONSHIP  
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**Type:** TE  
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